



League of Conservation Voters Education Fund

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CONTACT: Ann Riley, 202-785-0730
Phil Coleman, 717-234-2651

Concern for protection of clean air and water reaches across all Pennsylvania voter groups

WASHINGTON, DC—Clean air and water concerns are expected to be a key factor in how Pennsylvania voters cast their ballot in November. A poll released by the League of Conservation Voters Education Fund (LCVEF) shows that Pennsylvania voters are very concerned about the protection of clean air and clean water, rating this issue on par with other key political issue such as crime and drugs, education, health care, and Medicare and Social Security. The poll found that voters believe protecting clean air, water, and open space should be top priorities for elected leaders. Eighty-nine percent of voters said that the environmental actions of these leaders figure strongly in voting decisions.

“This poll shows that Pennsylvania voters are deeply concerned about protecting clean air, water and open space. Eighty-nine percent of voters consider these issues to be important in making their voting decision,” said Ann Riley, Mid-Atlantic Regional Director for LCVEF.

The Garin-Hart-Yang poll of 801 likely November 2000 voters indicates a strong commitment to environmental protection by voters in all parts of the state and across party lines. The poll was conducted from May 6-11, 2000 for LCVEF.

“Elected leaders should stand up and take notice that these issues matter to voters on a very fundamental level. They will support candidates who want to protect air, water, and open space,” said Phil Coleman, Executive Director for the Pennsylvania Conservation Education League.

Highlights of the poll include:

- Voters in the state rated clean air and water in the top five concerns, following education, crime and drugs, health care, Medicare and Social Security.
- When asked how important are issues involving clean water, clean air and open space in making a voting decision, 89 percent of voters said those issues were important, 43 percent very important and 46 percent somewhat important.
- When given a choice between two candidates—Candidate A who believes we must protect the environment and supports strong laws and enforcement of those laws and Candidate B believes there are too many government regulations and supports efforts to relieve the burden of regulation on business, 76 percent of Pennsylvania voters chose Candidate A, over Candidate B (15 percent).

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- When asked what conservation or environmental concerns voters worried about the most, 45 percent said water quality is their greatest worry. Air quality followed with 24 percent.
- Seventy-three percent of voters in the state say there is no need to pick between the environment and the economy. But if a choice had to be made between a strong economy and a clean environment, a majority of voters (54 percent) would rather see a clean environment than a strong economy (39 percent).
- Eighty-three percent of Pennsylvania voters want either tougher enforcement of environment laws or stronger laws.
- Sixty-three percent of those voters polled believe that coal needs to be replaced as a source of jobs and energy, while 22 percent believe that coal is an important source of jobs and energy.
- Seventy-three percent of voters believe that there should be strong limits on growth and development to protect Pennsylvania's quality of life, as compared to 19 percent who believe that growth and development is inevitable and the economic benefits offset problems that growth creates.

The League of Conservation Voters Education Fund is a nonprofit, nonpartisan 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to raising awareness about environmental issues, increasing the capacity and effectiveness of state and local environmental groups, and encouraging citizens to participate in the democratic process. For more information, visit: www.VoteEnvironment.org

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Methodology: The telephone survey of 801 registered voters likely to vote in the 2000 election was commissioned by LCVEF and conducted by Garin Hart Yang. The survey was conducted May 6-11, 2000. A random sample of this type is likely to yield a margin of error of +/- 3.5 percent in 95 out of 100 cases.